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COSMOS BROADCASTING CORPORATION

JIM KEELOR
PRESIDENT

July 2, 1996

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The Honorable Reed Hundt
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W., Suite 814
Washington, D.C. 20554

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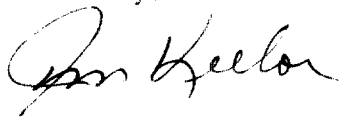
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Dear Chairman Hundt:

I hope the attached article offends your sense of good taste as it did mine. The Hollywood prima donnas (who brag they will have the "F" word on network TV in three years) continue to propose raw sewage for the network schedules. Faced with competition for quality producers and explicit sexual content on cable, the network executives seldom have the courage to say "no "

Local television stations are the last filtration plant between this Hollywood sewage and the public. In good conscience, how can there be any doubt that the "right to reject" rule must be retained?

Sincerely,



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Attachment

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POST OFFICE BOX 19023

GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA 29602

Twin Falls balks after peek at 'Morals'

By Cynthia Littleton

CBS's upcoming Steven Bochco sitcom *Public Morals* may not get a public airing on the network's affiliate in Twin Falls, Idaho.

Lee Wagner, general manager of KMTV(TV) Twin Falls, says it is highly unlikely that the station will air the first episode of *Public Morals* if the network goes with the same version of the show that was sent to affiliates, along with other new CBS shows, last month.

The comedy about New York City vice cops has not prompted a major outcry from other affiliates, but the show was discussed at the CBS affiliates meeting and will be high on the agenda of the affiliate board's monthly conference call tomorrow (July 2), according to board member Dino Corbin, general manager of KHSL(TV) Chico/Redding, Calif. Corbin himself made national headlines last year when he dropped talk show *Jenny Jones* because of content concerns.

Wagner says some of the jokes and language used in the pilot go "well beyond" the standards for broadcast television in Twin Falls, the nation's 195th-ranked TV market. *Public Morals* is slated to air Wednesday at 9:30 p.m. ET/PT and 8:30 p.m. in Twin Falls and other Mountain time zone markets. Peter Schruth, CBS's senior vice president of affiliate relations, says questions of standards and taste are ultimately "a local decision."

From the start, CBS has said that *Public Morals* will test the boundaries

of situation comedies with its strong language and adult themes. Bochco faced a similar controversy in 1993 when a handful of ABC affiliates, including the ABC outlet in Twin

Falls, rejected the gritty realism of his acclaimed police drama *NYPD Blue*.

One scene receiving a lot of attention in the *Public Morals* pilot comes early on, when a female officer uses a well-known police slang term, referring to the vice squad as the "pussy posse." CBS insiders say no decision has been made on whether the pilot will air unchanged as the first episode.

Bochco, who is co-producing the show with Jay Tarses, has been down this road before. "I remain utterly convinced that the audience this show is likely to attract will understand the context," he says. "We have proved over time that we've not been cavalier with our expanded palette."

Nevertheless, Bochco says he's not as devoted to breaking new ground with *Public Morals* as he was three years ago with *NYPD Blue*. "In that case, we fought hard to create a new template for broadcast standards," he says. "I thought it was an important thing to do at the



Steven Bochco's new *'Public Morals'* uses an 'expanded palette.'

time for the sake of the hour [drama]. It's not the same with a half-hour."

For Wagner, the fundamental problem with *Public Morals* lies in what he thinks is the mixed message CBS is sending with the show when the network is positioning itself as being responsive to parental concerns. "Why create [the impression] that we're America's TV network," Wagner says, "and then have a show that is diametrically opposed to that position?"

KHSL's Corbin doubts that many other CBS affiliates will balk at *Public Morals*. Most share Wagner's optimism about the general direction the network is heading after its merger last year with Westinghouse Electric Co.

"The lion's share of our lineup fits the 'Welcome Home' [promotional campaign] like a glove," says Chris Ender, CBS VP, media relations. "But we also value diversity. *Public Morals* is an edgy, adult series that we [think] is scheduled responsibly." ■